Intracellular mechanochemical waves in a model of active poroelastic media

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Many processes in living cells are controlled by biochemical substances regulating active stresses. Intracellular pattern formation have recently been derived that include active mechanical forces and the resulting advection processes [1]. The cytoplasm is an active material with both viscoelastic and liquid properties. We incorporate the active stress into a two-phase model of the cytoplasm which accounts for the spatiotemporal dynamics of the cytoskeleton and the cytosol. The cytoskeleton is described as a solid matrix that together with the cytosol as interstitial fluid constitutes a poroelastic material. We find different forms of mechanochemical waves including traveling, standing and rotating waves by employing linear stability analysis and numerical simulations [2]. This simple poroelastic model may be extended to describe diverse cellular phenomena happening at sufficiently short time scales, e.g., amoeboid reorganization or local deformations on protoplasmic droplets of Physarum polycephalum [3].

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